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ABSTRACT

School reform efforts in North Carolina strive to reflect the understanding that changes in the ways young children and their families are served must be systemic and sustained. Intended to help schools evaluate their current programs and set goals for continued improvement, this guide presents program standards and quality indicators based upon national and state trends regarding best practices for early childhood and elementary school programs. The guide is divided into 16 curriculum areas, each of which contains practical recommendations for school administrators and teachers. The curriculum areas included are: (1) Alcohol and Other Drug Education Programs; (2) Arts Education; (3) Comprehensive School Health Programs; (4) Computer Skills; (5) Counseling Programs; (6) Dropout Prevention Programs; (7) English Language Arts; (8) Healthful Living Education; (9) Information Skills; (10) Mathematics; (11) Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten; (12) Psychology Programs; (13) Science; (14) Second Language Studies; (15) Social Studies; and (16) Social Work Practice. Early childhood education programs are covered in Section 11, where the discussion focuses on four areas in particular: parents and families, curriculum and learning environment, teacher role qualifications and training, and class size and staff/child ratios. The guide emphasizes traditional family structure and values as co-determinants of educational outcomes. (ETB)

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A Guide to quality early childhood and elementary school programs

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
Bob Etheridge, State Superintendent

August 1994

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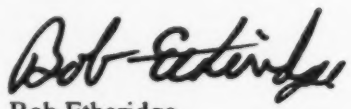
Foreword

The future of our nation and state is intertwined with the quality and success of our schools. Quality early childhood and elementary school programs are focused on the child and family. Schools seek to provide a safe, nurturing, inclusive, and stimulating environment where students, teachers, and parents work collaboratively as a community of learners. As such, school reform efforts in North Carolina reflect the understanding that changes in the way we serve young children and their families must be systemic and sustained.

The following program standards are based upon national and state trends regarding best practices for early childhood and elementary school programs. They set forth standards and indicators of quality program implementation. Schools should find these standards useful as they evaluate their current programs and set goals for continued improvement.



Bob Etheridge
State Superintendent

alcohol and other drug education programs

A comprehensive alcohol and other drug education program includes curriculum and course offerings for all students K-12. Components of the program are as follows:

Curriculum that is sequential, age appropriate and in compliance with Senate Bill 1126.

The D.A.R.E. Program

Programs which support the curriculum:

- Peer programs
- Student Assistance Programs
- Parent Involvement Programs

Staff development which supports the curriculum:

- Fundamentals of Alcohol and Other Drug Use and Abuse
- Family Connections Training
- Children of Alcoholics
- Substance-Exposed Children

Special events which support the curriculum:

- Project Graduation
- Red Ribbon Week
- Student Athlete Summer Institute

School policy which addresses procedures for referral for those who require substance abuse assessment and treatment services.

School policy which defines re-entry procedures for students returning to school after treatment.

Procedures for furnishing information to parents, students and employees about any alcohol and other drug counseling, rehabilitation and re-entry programs.

A school/community advisory council to support programming and to enhance coordination with community agencies.

An evaluation component to measure the effectiveness of programs.

elementary arts education

Arts Education is based upon National Standards and encompasses four arts disciplines: dance, music, theatre arts, and the visual arts. The North Carolina Basic Education Program requires that these four arts areas be made available to all students kindergarten through grade twelve and required of all students through grade five. The goals of the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* are consistent with the National Standards for Arts Education and emphasize a program which is active, participatory, constructivist, and most importantly, one which focuses upon student expression,communication, criitical and creative thinking through a student centered approach to the development of multiple intelligence.

In elementary arts education programs, students are expected to be able to communicate at a basic level in each of the four arts disciplines. Children should be singing, composing, painting, drawing, sculpting, and creating and performing their own dances and dramas, based upon concepts, thoughts, ideas, or feeling which are relevant to them. Students should be permitted and encouraged to combine the four arts areas as needed for their expression and to use artistic expression to communicate their knowledge of other subject and content areas studied in the school curriculum. Elementary arts education experiences should emphasize an approach in which the art made, performed, and/or viewed is for, by, and about children. In addition, children should be able to develop and present basic analyses of works of art and have an informed acquaintance with exemplary works of art from a variety of cultures and historical periods.

Evidence that a school's program is built upon the intent of standards set both at a national and state level includes the following:

- The program is supported by appropriately prepared specialists in each of the four arts areas.
- There is integration of the arts with all subject areas, by each classroom teacher, consistent with the child centered philosophy and practices of the arts specialists.
- Lesson plans by both arts specialists and classroom teachers reference the Arts Education Portion of the *Standard Course of Study* and give explicit indication of activities which correlate with goals in dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts.
- Arts Education materials are easily accessible to children in every classroom and are sufficient for large and small group, or individual work. Materials include those appropriate to dance experiences, creative drama activity, music, and the visual arts.
- Student work and products which result from arts education experiences are exhibited and shared in such a way as to educate the public about the learning process inherent in each arts area and the natural, logical correlation to relevant concepts which cross all subject and program areas.
- Assessment data is present for each arts area, included in portfolios and other records of children's progress. Such data is used to develop strategies for assisting students in overall learning goals as well as inform necessary changes and development of the arts education program.

[redacted] comprehensive school health programs

A comprehensive school health program provides for the physical, emotional, social, and educational development of children. There are eight major components of the program that when in place will address the present and future health and safety needs of our students. Local programs should be directed by a committee representing each of the eight components of a comprehensive school health program and one person from the school system should be responsible for coordinating and monitoring the effectiveness of the program in the schools (usually that person is the LEA Health Coordinator).

Health Services - Includes activities such as emergency first aid, immunization programs, health promotions and other activities typically conducted by school and public health nurses.

Health Education - Incorporated health instruction, school health services, and the promotion, maintenance, and utilization of safe and wholesome surroundings as well as the organization of sequential learning experiences as outlined in the North Carolina Healthful Living Teacher Handbook K-12.

Healthful School Environment - The school environment influences the health, habits, attitudes, comfort, safety and working efficiency of both students and staff, it needs to be and feel physically and emotionally safe.

Physical Education - The physical education program stresses regular and frequent fitness activities that promote the development of lifelong fitness habits.

School Counseling - Counselors, psychologists and social workers are an important link in the school-site health promotion program providing individual and group counseling related to health, social, and developmental concerns.

Food Service - School food services provide nutritious meals and snacks that reinforce the message students receive through health instruction.

School Site Health Promotion for Faculty and Staff - Faculty and staff involvement in health promotion activities provides positive role models, reinforces the school health message, and increases job satisfaction.

Integrated School and Community Programs - School health programs depend upon the support of the community. Joint school and community partnerships use community resources for health instruction, school site health promotion programs, health services and referrals. They seek to involve parents, health professionals, and a cross-section of the community in decisions regarding school health policy.

computer skills

The intent of the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study for Computer Skills, K-12* is to provide every student with the skills and knowledge necessary to be an independent user of technology for school and personal needs. The Computer Skills framework focuses on students understanding the role and ethical use of technology in society; applying skills in word processing with appropriate keyboarding techniques, database management, spreadsheet manipulation, and telecomputing to distant resources; and using these skills and knowledge to solve problems.

This ability to use technology to solve problems and to communicate with others reflects the standards set by three major documents as well as the results of a review of national computer education requirements used in developing the Computer Skills Curriculum. The *Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills* (SCANS-1992) from the U.S. Department of Labor identified five competencies for workforce readiness that stressed thinking skills and the use of technology. These five competencies "are the ability to manage resources, to work amicably and productively with others, to acquire and use information, to master complex systems, and to work with a variety of technologies." (SCANS, vii) The outcome-based education work of Spady (1991) and the thinking skills advocated by Marzano in the *Dimensions of Thinking: A Framework for Curriculum and Instruction* (Marzano, et. al., 1988) also served to set the standard for the Computer Skills Curriculum. The standards set by these documents correlated with the direction already in place in *Learning Connections: Guidelines for Media and Technology Programs* (NCDPI, 1992). Another primary source in the development of the curriculum was a review of existing computer education curricula and requirements in the other states.

When an elementary school has implemented the Computer Skills Curriculum, one should expect to find:

- Students and staff demonstrating ethical use of technology and an understanding of the Copyright Law and how it applies to computers and software.
- Lessons in all curricula in which the use of computers is an integral part as a tool to learn a concept, solve a problem, or communicate with others.
- A sequential curriculum in which students, teachers, media staff, and computer skills resource teachers together are involved in activities that develop independent users of technology for personal and school needs.
- Students developing initial keyboarding techniques and skills, to include proper posture, hand placement, and keying of all letter keys.
- Students using word processing software and telecomputing equipment to produce documents and communicate them to distant classes or retrieve information from distant sources.
- Students applying database searching and sorting skills to solve problems particularly in mathematics, social studies, and science.
- A school facility that provides opportunities for students to use computers within the regular classroom, in the media center, and in special labs, and to access software and information easily and as is developmentally appropriate.

[redacted] school counseling program

A school counseling program provides developmental, preventive, and remedial services to students, parents, and teachers with the intent of helping people reach their full potential as learners, parents/guardians, and educators. The Guidance Curriculum of the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* consists of specific goals, objectives, and measurable activities that address the developmental needs of all students. Developmental counseling services complement this curriculum.

In a comprehensive school counseling program one would expect to find the following services:

- Individual counseling to help students with educational, personal, social, or career concerns.
- Group counseling for students who have similar concerns such as alcohol and drug issues.
- Group guidance to help teachers implement the Standard Course of Study by doing instructional and informational presentations with classes of students.
- Consultation with parents, teachers and others to determine the most appropriate services to help students.
- Student assessment which includes educational tests, interest inventories and class room observations, to determine the most appropriate services for students.
- Referral/placement services to determine the most appropriate service to help with educational, personal, social, and career decisions, and in placing students in appropriate programs of study.
- Program coordination to provide a myriad of services such as assisting with the school testing program, working with college applications and financial aid information, providing orientation services to new students and establishing a peer helper program.

dropout prevention programs for elementary schools

Since 1985, the North Carolina General Assembly has appropriated state funds to aid in the reduction of students dropping out of school. While results have been impressive, the need to enhance program services prior to the middle grades continues to be paramount. In doing so, school personnel must adapt practices and principles that foster the education of the whole child.

Below are characteristics of schools that effectively build on the philosophy of preventing risk factors in elementary age students:

- There is balanced distribution of students participating in all instructional programs and services.
- All students are assessed for language development. Instructional opportunities foster proficiency in informal conversation, reading and writing.
- A team approach is used to develop intervention plans for high risk students.
- Collaborative arrangements are established to provide extended services to children and families in need.
- Teachers, parents and students frequently provide feedback on school climate variables.
- Parents are active in the life of the school. Parent education programs support the annual goals of the school improvement plan.
- Programs are established to reward outstanding teachers, staff and administrators.
- Emphasis is placed on academic enrichment for all students.
- Programs are established to monitor school attendance.
- Positive discipline is a philosophy—not a program.
- Social skills development is part of the on-going curriculum. Students help create a friendly school climate.

english language arts (communication skills) program

A balanced English language arts program should focus on children as active participants who have options and control over their own learning. Students should be active and engaged learners who experience the strands of reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing as constructive, dynamic processes. These strands should be taught as interrelated processes and should enhance students' ability to learn in other content areas. Within the English language arts program, there should be evidence of teachers modeling reading and writing to children, children doing personal reading and writing, and teachers reading and writing with children. There should be an obvious link between curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

If a school's English language arts program is a constructivist, wholistic program based on the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study*, one would expect to see the following:

- Printed resources developed by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction which relate to and support the *Standard Course of Study*
  1. Communication Skills Teacher Handbook
  2. Benchmarks of Proficiency for Reading and Writing K-12
  3. Linking Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
  4. Grades 1-2 Assessment in Communication Skills;
- Variety of literary, informational, and practical materials to enhance the balanced communication skills program and resource areas for reading, writing, and listening easily available to students;
- Lesson plans which reference the Communication Skills Standard Course of Study explicitly by objective;
- Reading instruction that focuses on strategies, comprehension, critical analysis, and application of information;
- Writing instruction that focuses on the writing process and the teaching of spelling, usage, and mechanics in context;
- Instruction that integrates the communication skills and promotes their use across the entire curriculum;
- Collection and use of observations and samples of students' work to plan for instruction and to document student progress.

elementary healthful living education

The new North Carolina Healthful Living Education *Standard Course of Study* was based on the research provided in several documents:

- **Healthy People 2000: National Health Objectives for the Year 2000**
  United States Department of Health and Human Services..
- **Physical Education Benchmarks**
  National Association for Sport and Physical Education..
- **Developmentally Appropriate Physical Education Practices**
  National Association for Sport and Physical Education..
- **Criteria for Comprehensive School Health Programs**
  National Centers for Disease Control (C.D.C.)
- **North Carolina Youth Risk Behavior Survey (1991)**
  National Centers for Disease Control (C.D.C.) and the N. C. Department of Public Instruction

Statewide and National Research and Recommendations: The statewide and national research and recommendations contained in these five documents were used to set standards for the Healthful Living Education content, effective teacher practices, and K-12 benchmarks for students. The purpose of Healthful Living Education is to provide appropriate instruction for the acquisition of behaviors that contribute to a safe, healthy, and physically active lifestyle. This can be achieved through a program that reflects the needs of the student throughout his/her school experience. Students at the elementary school level need the ability to use appropriate health-promotion resources, self-esteem building skills, self-management skills, and interpersonal communication skills essential to a productive and enjoyable life.

Because current research demonstrates that a youngster's health and fitness status is determined more by his or her own behaviors than by advances in medical technology or availability of health services, it is essential that we provide all North Carolina students with valuable Healthful Living Education knowledge, skills, and health-promotion behaviors. The needs of handicapped students should be addressed through a specifically designed, adapted physical education program. The following elementary school teaching practices would reflect the appropriate implementation of the Healthful Living Education curriculum:

- **An Active Learning Environment:** It is well documented that young people are not influenced to adopt healthier behaviors by being merely passive recipients of health knowl edge. The best teaching employ methods that are interactive and participatory.
- **Wide Variety of Teaching Methods is Employed:** Some students learn best by listen ing; others by reading or taking notes. Many students are visual learners; still others learn well if they can manipulate or use hands-on activities. Creative and innovative teaching methods helps to maintain student interest and student involvement in the learning process.
- **Teaching the Whole Child:** The learning of Healthful Living Education occurs in all domains: cognitive (knowledge/thinking), psychomotor (physical skills), affective (related to feelings or emotions), and action or life skills (having to do with choice or behavior).

When Healthful Living Education is taught in all of these areas, using a variety of teaching strategies, the ultimate goal to helping our children to develop a safe, healthy, and physically active lifestyle will be accomplished.

information skills

The American Association of School Librarians document, *Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs*, describes an effective school library media program as one that ensures that students and staff are effective users of ideas and information. This program provides both intellectual and physical access to materials in all formats; instruction that promotes children's competence and stimulates their interest in reading, viewing, and using information and ideas; and collaboration with other teachers to design learning strategies to meet the needs of the curriculum and individual students. (*Information Power,* 1)

The intent of the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study for Information Skills* is to equip learners with the skills needed to find, evaluate, use, and create information and ideas in order to communicate with greater power and effectiveness. When a school has an effective school library media program based on the guidelines in both *Information Power* and *Learning Connections: Guidelines for Media and Technology Programs* published by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, one should expect to see:

- A daily schedule that allows teachers and students continuous access to all resources while simultaneously offering a systematic curriculum that develops the cognitive skills necessary for life-long learning. This schedule also allows adequate time for planning with teachers, managing the collection, and maintaining the facility.
- A carefully selected and systematically organized collection of diverse learning resources that represents a wide range of curriculum-related and developmentally-appropriate subjects, levels of difficulty, formats, and technological delivery systems.
- A process whereby students and staff have access to information and materials outside the media center and the school building.
- A vital collaboration between the media coordinator and all other school staff in the design and provision of instructional materials and strategies that address a wide range of differences in teaching and learning styles.
- A sequential curriculum in which students, teachers, and media staff *together* are involved in meaningful, relevant activities that encourage children to view information skills as a logical extension and expansion of the classroom.
- A facility that functions as the information center of the school, the focus of integrated, interdisciplinary, and school-wide learning activities.
- A program that encourages each child's enjoyment of reading, viewing, and listening.

[redacted] elementary mathematics

Three documents set the standards for the teaching, learning, and assessing of mathematics. Published by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the *Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics* (1989), the *Professional Teaching Standards* (1991), and the *Assessment Standards* (draft October 1993) describe classrooms where students are actively engaged in constructing mathematical understandings, in using manipulative materials for a purpose, in conducting investigations and recording findings, and in working cooperatively to solve problems. Teachers lead by questioning and probing, by encouraging students to clarify their thinking orally and in writing, by presenting problems rather than solutions. Assessment focuses on identifying children's thinking and reasoning to better plan future opportunities and experiences.

In elementary classrooms the development of number sense, the recognition of patterns and relationships, and the use of calculators are all integrated into a balanced mathematics program which also involves students in geometry, prealgebra, measurement, and data investigations. Few lessons rely on textbook pages alone; pencil and paper are used to record what happens in math lessons as frequently as they are used for drill and practice. The current focus of a classroom's mathematics lessons is evident from the materials on shelves and counter tops and the students' work that is on display. Evidence that a classroom's program is built on the vision described in the NCTM documents and the North Carolina *Standard Course of Study* comes from a variety of sources:

- Manipulative materials are easily accessible to children at all times and are in quantities sufficient for large as well as small groups. Materials related to the mathematics topic currently being studied are in evidence.
- Bulletin boards have math puzzles and problems that allow children to work cooperatively to solve them. Other bulletin boards display children's responses to open-ended questions, non-routine investigations, data displays, and samples of students' work.
- Lesson plans reference the *Standard Course of Study* either explicitly or by brief statements of goals. They give some indication of the activities and materials used in mathematics for the week beyond the text pages.
- There is evidence that the mathematics program goes beyond a focus on computation and includes content from all seven strands in lesson plans, classroom supplies, or displays of students' work. Calculators are used to solve problems and assist students in going beyond their abilities with algorithms.
- Students work cooperatively on challenging problems set in real world contexts. Children play games to learn number facts, write in journals or logs to explain their understandings of the mathematics they are learning, and create graphs which report the results of their investigations.
- Mathematics is taught daily and is also incorporated into science and social studies investigations. There are connections with mathematics and literature through students' journal entries and literature. Art and mathematics blend in visual displays.
- Assessment data is used to inform instruction and to plan flexible, changing groups for specific needs. Summative evaluations are based on evidence collected in a variety of ways (written work, observations, informal interviews, products,) over time. There is a balance of on-demand tasks, collaborative work, and revised (polished) work.

early childhood education programs

Quality early childhood programs must provide a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of young children while responding to the needs of families. (NAEYC, 1987) These programs recognize each child as a whole person whose growth occurs in developmental stages that are sequential and continuous. The early childhood programs recognize and value families in their cultural, linguistic, and social diversity as active partners within the school community.

Preschool and kindergarten classroom programs must provide both a developmentally appropriate and an intellectually ambitious curriculum for youngsters. Such a curriculum is grounded in the knowledge of ways children develop skills. It further builds on the interests, needs, and concerns of this age group, is concrete, and relates to the present environment. Knowledge of child development, appropriate topics, and activities must come together in the curriculum so that young children will have enhanced language achievement. *Circle of Childhood* is the state adopted framework for these programs. *Creative Curriculum, Explorations,* and *Young Children in Action* (High/Scope) are other curricula available to supplement *Circle of Childhood*. Moreover, kindergarten programs should incorporate the Standard Course of Study.

To ensure that such programs are implemented, four areas must be developed and maintained:

Parents and Families

- Parents and families are children's first and most important role model.
- Parents and families are active partners in the education of their children.
- Parents and families are active learners.
- Parents, families, and schools support each other.
- Parents and families are offered an active role in the life of the classroom.
- Parents and families are advisors and decision-makers.
- Families and schools are advocates for each other.

Curriculum and Learning Environment

- A curriculum is well defined and articulated by teachers, teaching assistants, principals and central office personnel. Lesson plans and activities reflect appropriate teaching and learning strategies. The curriculum is supported by a physical environment which provides children opportunities to work with concrete, exploratory materials and experiences. This environment should be comfortable and inviting and have plants, animals and evidence of children's work. Facilities are safe, secure and comply with legal requirements for the state of North Carolina.
- The intellectual environment supports the curriculum by allowing children to explore concrete materials, take risk with learning activities, interact with language and with other children and adults, and have feedback necessary to validate and extend learning.

- Materials, supplies, and equipment support the learning environment. Such materials and supplies include literacy props, paper, pencils and trade books. Equipment for establishing centers for dramatic play, gross and fine motor skills, block play activities, cooking, sand and water play, tabletoys, and outdoor activities must be available. Center activities should be changed on a regular basis and offer invitations for language development. Center objectives must define the task for children to accomplish. Such task allow children to show increased eagerness to learn, gain reinforcement of their learning through an integration of activities with other learning and subject matter.
- Learning activities for young children are in context. These need to be concrete, not abstract, simple, not complex, and rooted in the here and now, not remote in time and space.
- Teachers must guide children to represent activities and experiences in a variety of media, e.g. verbalization, drawings, scribbles, models, and dramatic play. Moreover, children need to be guided to develop sense of planning before engaging in activities and have a chance to reflect at the completion of the activity.

Teacher Role, Qualifications and Training

- Teachers relate to all children with warmth, sensitivity, and caring to establish and sustain climate in which learning is joyful.
- Teachers invite children to participate in planning and creating a rich, stimulating environ ment which encourages interaction, exploration, and investigation.
- Teachers provide encouragement, support, and challenge, as appropriate to help children develop personal goals.
- Teachers model respect for others and the environment.
- Teachers collaborate with other professionals and the children to plan, create, and sustain a safe climate in which children may work harmoniously, creatively and productively.
- Teachers draw upon a variety of organizational patterns to make optimal use of space and to integrate a variety of materials and equipment that stimulates active learning.
- Teachers provide time, opportunity, and a range of different experiences to stimulate children to interact, reflect, communicate, and learn.
- Teachers structure opportunities for children to work individually and with other children; with their teacher and other adults; and in groups of different sizes and compositions formed for different purposes.

[redacted] early childhood education programs *(continued)*

- Teachers focus on the ongoing learning of individual children and on developmentally appropriate assessment and evaluation.
- Teachers use the information gained through assessment and evaluation to make thoughtful, informed, and tactful interventions as needed.
- Teachers exchange information about the child and his work with the child and parents on an ongoing basis.
- Teachers model and demonstrate enthusiasm and a disposition for learning, and help children to enjoy learning as meaningful relevant, and personally satisfying.
- Teachers hold or are working toward the Birth-kindergarten certification.

Class Size and Staff/Child Ratios

- Class size for any group involving three-year-olds should not exceed 16 children.
- Class size for four-year-olds should be maintained at 16-18 children.
- Class size for five, six, seven and eight-year-olds should be maintained at no more than 23.
- The staff/child ratio for any group involving three-year-olds should be maintained at 1:8 at all times.
- The staff/child ratio for any group involving four-year-olds should be maintained at 1:8 or 1:9 at all times.
- The staff/child ratio for five, six, seven and eight-year-olds should be maintained at 1:12.
- Class size should be no more than 15 with one teacher.

[redacted] comprehensive school psychology programs

Comprehensive school psychology programs consist of direct and indirect services which require involvement with the entire education system: (1) students, teachers, administrators and other school personnel; (2) families, surrogate caretakers, and other community agencies; and (3) curriculum, organizational, physical and temporal variables which play major roles within the system.

In a comprehensive school psychology program, one would expect to find:

Consultation/Collaboration: School psychologists consult and collaborate with parents, school staff, and community organizations concerning educational, behavorial, and mental health issues. Consultation services to school staff may focus on modification of instructional programs, promoting positive climates for learning and teaching, understanding of the needs of particular students, developing procedures for preventing learning and behavior problems.

Intervention Activities:

Individuals and Groups: School psychologists provide direct and indirect interventions to facilitate functioning of individuals and groups of students with concern for how schooling influences and is influenced by their cognitive, behavioral, emotional and social development. Such interventions may include, but are not limited to: instruction, counseling, behavior management, affective educational programs, and training programs to improve coping skills.

Programs or System: School psychologists facilitate the educational services and child-care functions of school personnel, parents, and community agencies by providing program or system-level interventions. Such interventions may include, but are not limited to, organizational planning and development and inservice educational programs for parents and school personnel.

Psychological and Psychoeducational Assessment:

Child Study: School psychologists provide multifactored psychological and psychoeducational assessment of the school and personal functioning of students. Assessment areas include personal-social adjustment, cognitive development, intelligence/scholastic aptitude, adaptive behavior, academic achievement, sensory and perceptual-motor functioning, neuropsychological status, environmental-cultural influences, and vocational aptitude and interests.

Group Assessment: School psychologists may participate in group assessment programs. Such activities might include selecting appropriate instruments and procedures, implementing assessment programs, and utilization of assessment results.

Program Development and Evaluation:

School psychologists provide program development services to schools, systems, and community agencies in areas such as: needs assessment, evaluation of regular and special educa- tion programs, service on committees responsible for developing and plan-ning education activities, early identification and prevention activities, etc.

Liaison:

School psychologists may provide liaison service with community, state, and federal agencies concerning the mental health and educational needs of children.

Applied Research:

School psychologists may participate in applied research activities which lead to improved decision-making and services for students and to effective program development.

elementary science

If a school's science program is student centered, activity based, constructivist, and based on the North Carolina *Standard Course of Study* , one would expect to find the following:

- Students engaged in explorations which are developmentally appropriate and reflect the goals of the *Standard Course of Study.*
- Explorations that lead students to in-depth understanding of science concepts.
- The use of questioning techniques to guide students toward independent thinking.
- A lab first instructional program that begins with exploration, develops understanding of the concept through discussion and questions, and provides student opportunities to apply the concepts.
- Students working in cooperative groups to solve problems and develop independent thinking skills.
- Using flexible grouping that might include small groups such as, K-2 students working in groups of 2 and 3-5 students working in groups of 3 or less, which are recommended sizes for cooperative grouping at these grade levels.
- Exploration extensions to include field studies, field trips, invited speakers and other out side resources.
- Performance and open-ended assessment activities that begin with instruction as well as other forms of assessment.
- Lesson plans which reference the goals and objectives of the *Standard Course of Study.*
- Evidence of science exploration through student designed bulletin boards.
- Manipulative materials available and accessible for student explorations.
- Development of process skills through science content objectives.
- Use of computers for the collection of data, graphing, and data analysis.
- Connections of science curriculum with math, technology, and other content areas.

elementary second language studies

If a school's second language program is proficiency-based, student-centered, focused on the development of communicative competence within an authentic cultural context, and based on the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study*, one would expect to find the following:

- A teacher who is proficient in the second language, knowledgeable about the cultures in which the language is spoken, and who understands child development, language acquisition, and elementary teaching methodology.
- Students who have frequent contact with the second language so that they can develop communicative competency.
- Reading and writing introduced at grade three in programs in which there is frequent instruction, allowing students to see in writing what they can already say.
- A variety of materials, including manipulatives, which are developmentally-appropriate, interesting, and further the language-acquisition goals of students.
- Developmentally-appropriate activities for beginning language learners which focus first on the development of listening and speaking skills, and which promote the use of cooperative learning and higher-order thinking skills.
- Activities which allow children to develop an awareness of the lives of children living in the cultures where the second language is spoken.
- Students who are encouraged to build a base of understanding about other cultures, enabling them to learn to live with people from many cultures.
- Ongoing student assessment which is as authentic as possible and which allows students to see their progress, thereby reinforcing their self-esteem.
- Program evaluation which allows program planners to build on strengths and identify and correct weaknesses.
- Articulation with the middle school and high school second language programs so that students will benefit from shared goals and program support.

the standard elementary social studies

A balanced and effective social studies program prepares students to be active, informed, and responsible citizens of the state and the nation. Social studies increases students' awareness of their world, their nation, and their state, giving them fundamental understanding of their own society and others both past and present. Students acquire and perfect skills of individual and group inquiry and examine a broad range of peoples and cultures. Students gain from the social studies programs the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that enable them to be effective problem-solvers, good decision-makers, and wise planners. They are prepared, as a result of their social education to deal with present, recurring, and unforeseen problems.

The social studies program at the primary level introduces children to important concepts and generalizations from history and the social sciences through an integrated study of children and their families, their homes and schools, and the neighborhoods and surroundings familiar to children and proceed deliberately to children and families, homes and schools, and neighborhoods in other environments. Such an approach enables children to build increasingly sophisticated concepts and generalizations and enhances their ability to examine the perspective of other children in other places and times.

At the elementary level, the social studies program continues the extending perspectives approach. Beginning with the fourth grade study of North Carolina, its regions and the regions of which it is a part, students progress to fifth grade study of the Western Hemisphere. As they begin this regional study they are able to reinforce basic concepts taken from history and the social science disciplines. In their study of regions, students begin to build geographic understandings of representative cultures and the values they hold. They learn about the varied ways societies organize their economic, social, and political lives. In addition to the emphasis on cultural geography, content for regional study is drawn from the social science disciplines of anthropology and sociology, economics, and political science. The study of history provides a context for understanding how societies have changed over times and the contributions each has made. Given the swiftness of change and our global information systems, students' examinations of theses societies must require continuous reference to current events and trends.

If a school's social studies program is student-centered, activity-based, constructivist, and based on the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* (SCS),
one would expect to find the following:

- Alignment of the written, taught, and tested curriculum, with a suggested pacing guide being developed as a part of the alignment process;
- A print-rich environment which provides adequate and varied instructional materials and resources including the following:
  - up-to-date maps and globes
  - materials for studying current events, i.e., newspapers and news magazines
  - fiction and nonfiction trade books to support integration of social studies with other content areas
  - materials which support multicultural instruction
  - materials which support "now and then" concepts and comparisons;

elementary social studies *(continued)*

- Use of a variety of instructional strategies and methods, i.e., role play, case studies, simulations, seminars and investigations;
- Use of a variety of assessment strategies accompanied by analysis and use of data for instructional decision-making;
- Content-specific staff development to support instruction;
- Incorporation of the social studies skill goals into instructional design and delivery;
- Interdisciplinary and cross disciplinary integration of social studiesconcepts;
- Patterns of organization for instructional design and delivery, such as the Five Themes of Geography and the five organizing questions used in grades four through seven, as identi fied in the SCS;
- Geography as the lead discipline in grades four through seven;
- Focus on higher order thinking skills: critical, creative, and reflective thinking;
- Opportunities for problem-solving, planning, and decision-making relating social studies concepts to real-world experiences;
- Use of technology and resource persons to enhance instruction.

[redacted] comprehensive social work practice

While academic instruction is the primary goal of public education, human and social factors are of major importance in achieving effective education; thus the need for augmenting the instructional program with a comprehensive program in school social work. A comprehensive school social work program includes remedial (crisis intervention and problem solving) and preventive (compensatory and developmental) services. However, because most LEAs employ only a few social workers, significant collaborative efforts with parents, students, school system personnel, and community human service providers and volunteers are necessary in order to adequately respond to student needs. The following characteristics describe a comprehensive social work program:

- **Crisis Intervention**
  During a crisis, the school social worker may provide individual counseling and support to a student, groups of students, their families, and school staff. Frequently, the school social worker will draw upon community resources to assist in this effort. While frequently unanticipated and stressful, crises can also provide opportunities for change and maximum benefits may arise from intervention during these times.

- **Problem Solving**
  Service request are received from teachers, staff members, administrators, parents, students, and community agencies. Services to students may include direct counseling, forming and leading student support groups, providing home assessments and plans for special needs children, advocating for a child or referring to school committees or community resources. A social worker can also help effect changes in the school procedures and environment. To address these areas, a school social worker may need to collaborate with teachers, parents and administrators; provide in-service training to teachers and staff; encourage student self-help activities; plan and implement programs for parents, interested community members, and agencies.

- **Preventive Services**
  Prevention programs are designed to provide all students with the opportunity to develop effective social skills and emotional stability. Programs currently being provided by school social workers address areas such as dropout prevention, parenting skills, decision mak ing, problem solving, coping, conflict resolution, self esteem, cultural and racial relationships, and effective communication. Parent outreach and involvement is critical to the success of preventive programming. Social work intervention in the home and community can help parents better understand both the school system and their children's needs.

notes

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